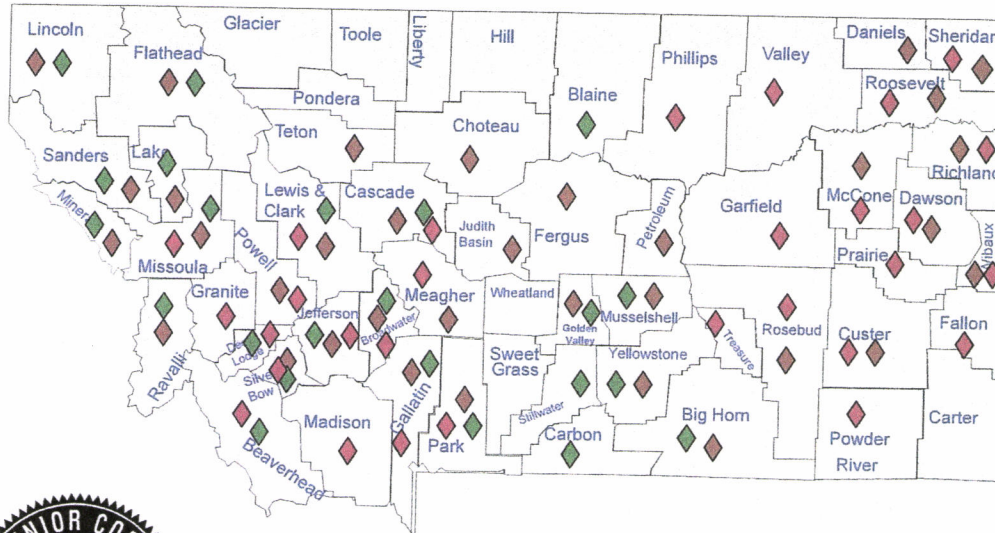


Senior Corps in Montana



Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
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SERVICE**

- Foster Grandparent Program
- Senior Companion Program
- RSVP

Senior Corps is America's largest volunteer network for people 55 and older.

There are **20 Senior Corps Programs** in Montana.

- ✦ **Senior Companions** make independence a reality. By sharing their time, experience, and compassion they help seniors and other adults with mobility and self-care limitations to continue to live as independently as possible.
- ✦ **Foster Grandparents** give the kind of comfort and love that set a child on the path toward a successful future. They are a role model, a mentor, and a friend to children in Head Start, schools, non-profit day cares, and other youth facilities.
- ✦ **RSVP** volunteers share their lifetime of experience by tackling critical needs in our communities. RSVP is America's largest volunteer network for people 55 and older.

Snapshot: In just the last year, over 6,600 Senior Corps volunteers served in Montana:

- ✦ Three Senior Companion Programs with 191 Senior Companions served 177,930 hours in 31 counties and the Fort Peck Indian Reservation.
- ✦ Five Foster Grandparent Programs with 319 Foster Grandparents served 286,016 hours in 23 counties, as well as the Fort Belknap, Crow, Northern Cheyenne, and Flathead Indian Reservation.
- ✦ Fifteen RSVP Programs with 6,100 volunteers served 1,100,739 hours in 28 counties, as well as the Fort Belknap, Northern Cheyenne, and Flathead Indian Reservations.*

*Due to FY'11 RSVP Federal budget cuts, 3 RSVP Sponsors relinquished their sponsorship as of 06/30/2011 which resulted in the closure of RSVP in 3 Eastern Montana Counties (Carter, Fallon and Hill). The newest RSVP started 9/12 in Daniels, Sheridan and Roosevelt Counties.

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Montana Senior Corps

SENIOR COMPANIONS helped **1,109 at-risk individuals**. Of those, **807 or 73%** remained independent and in their own home. The Montana State Median Annual Nursing Home Care Costs in 2011: \$71,083 – Private*, \$66,612 – Semi Private*. If those 807 individuals were not able to live at home with the help of a Senior Companion – $807 \times \$66,612 =$ **\$53,755,884.00**



*According to Genworth Financial – State comparison Report www.genworth.com

FOSTER GRANDPARENTS mentored and tutored **2,876** school-age students that had been identified as at-risk and below their appropriate level of reading and/or math skills. By the yearend, **72%** were at appropriate level. Foster Grandparents also mentored and tutored **613** children in Head Start or non-profit daycares that by yearend, **73%** were at appropriate level of pre-literacy and/or social skills.



RSVP VOLUNTEERS serve with **1,087** non-profit organizations and agencies throughout the state of Montana, addressing the critical needs in their communities. Some examples of the priority needs and impact last year include:



- ✦ In **Education**, statewide volunteers mentored, tutored, and provided other support activities for **14,446** children in schools, after-school programs, and other youth organizations.
- ✦ To ensure **Healthy Futures**, volunteers provided congregate and home-delivered meals and other support services to **9,586** at-risk seniors. Of these seniors, **8,667 or 90%** were able to remain independent in their own homes.
- ✦ In **Disaster Preparedness**, **13,584** RSVP and other community volunteers were trained and are training other community members. Of the many impacts shown, RSVP volunteers worked with the 911 Center in Ravalli County to register **342** cell phone numbers to be able to better respond to emergencies where residents have no land-line telephones. Several volunteers helped during the Flood Disasters in June, 2011 including two CERT-trained volunteers from Richland/McCone RSVP that were deployed to help in Hardin MT for 5 weeks. In Roundup, 18 volunteers contributed over **5,880 hours to the immediate flood recovery effort** within a five-county area, including five CERT-trained RSVP volunteers that manned the phones for the County Disaster Emergency Services.
- ✦ In **Clean Energy**, Great Falls RSVP volunteers collect and transport cardboard for recycling. In the last year, the amount of **waste entering the landfill was reduced by 212,013 lbs.** as a result of their efforts. RSVP volunteers in Sidney helped with the annual E-Waste Event which resulted in **60,000 lbs. of harmful lead, mercury, and plastic that did not enter the landfill.**
- ✦ In **Economic Opportunity**, 26 Miles City RSVP volunteers contributed 1,663 hours at the St. Vincent DePaul Thrift Store which resulted in revenue of **\$113,000** that the Thrift Store was able to give to individuals in need and to help support essential non-profit organizations in the community. In Lewis & Clark County, 12 volunteers assisted and prepared **1,200 Federal and State Income Tax returns** which resulted in refunds of **\$812,981.00 for seniors and low-income individuals.**

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SERVICE** ★★ ★

Mr. Chairman, Members of the committee.

My name is Duane Lutke, Director of Area VI Agency on Aging in Polson.

The points I have to make today concern

- **Jobs created in local communities with Aging Funding**
- **The important role Area Agencies do in supporting Volunteer programs such as Senior Corp in Montana.**
- **The amazing job Area Agencies do by replication of state and federal resources with local resources.**

We have heard a lot of discussion about the importance placed by this Legislature of creating and retaining Job's for Montanan's. Let me give you an example of the jobs provided in small communities by the Aging Services funding provided through Montana's ten Area Agencies on Aging. For example, in the four rural counties & reservation served by Area VI Agency on Aging we find this year One Hundred Forty Six (146) jobs for local people providing assistance to seniors to maintain them in their homes and or provide life assistance services.

Examples of these jobs include Homemakers in communities such as Superior, Libby, Pablo and Hot Springs. Cooks and Nutrition managers in St. Regis, Eureka, Plains, Ronan, and at 17 other senior citizen centers providing nutritional meals to local seniors. They include Respite care workers, Bus Drivers and Transportation Managers, Dispatchers, Bookkeepers, Long Term Care Ombudsman, Information & Referral Technicians, Case Managers, Volunteer recruiters and managers. Simple match converts these 146 jobs in one area agency to almost 1,500 jobs by the 10 area agencies in Montana. These are ALL local jobs in YOUR communities. We need to continue these valuable resources by funding aging services fully.

Therefore, I request this committee provide adequate funding for aging services provided by Area Agencies on Aging. A good start in that direction would be restoring the One Time Only funding of the past three legislative sessions into the base budget for Senior & Long Term Care Division. In addition, providing \$3 Million in new funding would help meet the current need while maintaining local jobs and support for our seniors in their own homes.

Secondly, Montana's Area Agencies on Aging, primarily through use of State provided resources, sponsor or otherwise support many of the Volunteer programs under the "Senior Corps" umbrella. Last year, RSVP, Senior Companion and Foster Grandparent Programs in Montana recruited and placed over 6,600 volunteers age 55 or older. Combined they provided 1,564,685 hours of service. Not only did they help local governments, schools and non-profits accomplish their mission but contributed to the mental health of their volunteers by combating isolation and depression which all too often lead to suicide in Montana. Plus FGP and SCP provide small tax free stipends which supplement incomes of low income seniors so they don't have to choose between food and medicines. Without the dollars provided by Area Agencies on Aging to meet the match requirements many of these programs would go away.

Third, it should be noted that funds you provide from state or federal sources are not just spent. They are multiplied several times over from local resources. County and tribal funds, funds from private foundations, local fundraisers and funding from program participants enhance the dollars you provide as seed to our programs. For example, in FY2012 over 50% of Area VI's In-Home services budgets were provided from local resources. In Area VI's \$905,000 nutrition program over 60% or \$551,837 was provided by local resources while less than 40% was federal or state dollars. Area Agencies cannot and do not rely solely on state and federal tax dollars, however without these seed dollars our programs would be curtailed severely.

Thank You for your support of our Area Agencies on Aging and OUR Senior Citizens as you vote to adequately fund Aging Services in Montana.